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# INFORMATION REPORT

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• COUNTRY USSR (Estonian SSE)

**SUBJECT** General Military Information Concerning Saaremaa Island

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ACQUIRED

DATE OF  
INFO. November 1949

1. All harbors and harbor areas on the Island of Saaremaa are now in a usable condition and all World War II damage to the installations has now been fully repaired. There are no special or significant installations at any of the harbors and the general sea communications and activity is relatively small. The following harbors are now being used for sea communications: Triigi (northern Saaremaa - 9 km north of Karja); Jaagurahu (western Saaremaa - 8 km NW from Kihelkonna); Mõntu (southern Saaremaa - 6 km north of Sõrve, 58-03N, 22-12E); Tori and Roomassaare (both in the vicinity of Kuressaare).
2. In mid-November 1949 it was accurately estimated that the number of Soviet troops on Saaremaa did not exceed 4,000 men. The troops were principally marine-infantry soldiers under the command of a Soviet colonel. The troop headquarters for the island is located at Lossi Street, Kuressaare (48-14N, 22-29E). The troops on the island were distributed as follows: approximately 2,000 men are quartered at Kuressaare; approximately 1,000 men assigned to various points along the northwestern area of Saaremaa; and approximately 1,000 men to the peninsula of Sõrve and the surrounding area.
3. The two principal seaplane bases on the island are located at the harbor of Tori (approximately 1/2 km southwest of Kuressaare) and at Lake Karujärv (approximately 7 km northwest of Kardla). Normally around 20 planes are in operation from these bases. They are being used for observation purposes in connection with the activities of the coast guard units and are subject to the command of the local coast guard commander.
4. The sea coast of Saaremaa is guarded by MVD troops. They were identified as wearing a blue-gray uniform. The guard posts and observation points have been generally placed throughout the entire area. The observation points have, however, been more carefully placed when covering the areas frequently used by the local fishermen. The observation points are generally approximately 15 meters high, well camouflaged, and connected by telephone to the surrounding guard posts. The principal guard sub-headquarters are located at: 1) Karja, northern Saaremaa; 2) Kihelkonna (58-21N, 22-03E); and 3) Mõntu, southern Saaremaa. These stations are in radio communication with their headquarters at Kuressaare. Normally a seacoast guard unit is approximately 20 men in strength with a senior lieutenant in command. These guard units are armed with light automatic weapons and normal infantry equipment. They generally, or at least at the principal points, have searchlight installations at their disposal.

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- a. At the observation points two men are on constant duty, their equipment including field glasses, light machine guns, Very pistols for signalling purposes, plus standard infantry equipment. Recently the use of dogs has been noted to be standard procedure by the guards. An inspection of a post's area is generally made once during the day and one time during the night.
5. The principal task of the sea patrol is to watch over the activities of the local population. All fishing boats are under the jurisdiction of the coast guard and at designated locations compounds have been arranged for the protection of the boats when they are not in use. The fishermen receive the allotted amount of gasoline or fuel for the fishing area they wish to visit at that particular time. Every boat and fisherman has his number and a metal plate with a corresponding number on it which must be left with the patrol guard of the particular location before setting out to sea. The fishermen are forbidden to go beyond a 25 km limit from the seashore. In the event this distance is exceeded they are promptly summoned, if observed, by a patrol boat or one of the seaplanes assigned to the area. All fishing boats are forbidden to depart for the sea before sunrise and they must return to the compound before darkness. Occasionally permission can be procured for overnight fishing, but in such cases only if a guard or local reliable Communist is allowed to accompany the fisherman. Upon return to the compound the metal registration plates are returned to the boat owner and fisherman.
- a. The motorboats of the sea patrol are about 15 British Registered Tons in size, carry a crew of five, have a speed of 15-18 knots, and in addition to small automatic weapons are armed with a 45 mm cannon.
- b. The members of the coast guard have also the authority to check the documents of a native traveling in the area or villages, etc., and to conduct an on-the-spot search of the houses of the inhabitants of the island.
6. The following is a list of the known guard posts, patrol boat harbors, and searchlight observation installations:
  - Triigi Harbor - Guard post and patrol boat harbor.
  - Pamorort (Pakulaid-Pammana) - Searchlight installation.
  - Panza Pank (NW coast of Saaremaa) - Guard post, searchlight installation.
  - Undva Nina (NW coast of Saaremaa) - Searchlight installation.
  - Jaagurahu (8 km NW of Kihelkonna) - Guard post, patrol boat harbor.
  - Lahetaguse (SE Coast of Saaremaa, 13 km south of Lumanda) - Guard post.
  - Tiirmetsa (SW coast of Saaremaa, 17 km SSE of Lumanda) - Guard post.
  - Rahuste (7 km north of Jamaaja) - Guard post.
  - Jamaaja (southern point of Saaremaa) - Guard post.
  - Karuste-Ranna - Guard post and searchlight installation.
  - Mõntu - Guard post, patrol boat harbor.
  - Salme (southern Saaremaa - 9 km north of Asekula) - Guard post.
  - Kuressaare - headquarters of the coast guard, patrol boat harbor at Roomassaare.
  - Island of Vilsandi - Guard post, patrol boat harbor, searchlight installation (No civilians allowed on this island)
  - Irbenish Bay - Guard patrol. The entrance to the Gulf of Riga is guarded by two mine sweepers approximately 400 British Registered Tons. These are armed with two guns.
  - Island of Abruksa (10 km south of Kuressaare) - Marine units.
7. The Soviets have installed several long range artillery defense positions on the island. As far as is known these installations are of a permanent nature but without heavy steel armor. The locations of these artillery defense positions are as follows:
  - a. Triigi - Two batteries, 2 guns each, 152 mm rifles. Service personnel number about 60 men quartered in bunkers in the vicinity of the batteries.
  - b. Murika (northern point of Saaremaa) - One artillery position, three guns of 210 mm caliber. About 100 men are assigned to this position.
  - c. Panga Pank (northern Saaremaa on the Kõrdema Bay) - One artillery position, three guns of 210 mm caliber.

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- d. Undva Nina (northwest coast of Saaremaa) - Artillery position, two batteries of large caliber, number of guns unknown.
- e. Peninsula of Sõrve - One artillery position at Karuste. The size and number of batteries is unknown. According to the number of transports carrying cement and steel supports it is reported that installations of some considerable size have been built. The southern section of the peninsula is a forbidden zone and closed to all civilians of the island. The use of the road Rahuste - Indu-Kaimri is also forbidden to all civilians.

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8. [REDACTED] no indication that the Soviets have any radar stations on the Island of Saaremaa. (This is, however, considered highly unlikely [REDACTED])

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9. There has been no information or observation to indicate that the Soviets have built any V-1 or other rocket installations on the island.\* This, however, excludes any activity that may have taken place in the area closed to civilian observation. No transport has been observed to indicate such activity.
10. At the time of this report there were no infantry units located on the island. During the past year a number of large concentrations of tanks have been noted on the island. These tanks are reported as the old model of the Stalin tank, with no details available. During the summer of 1948 two concentrations of tanks arrived on the island from Leningrad. At the time of arrival these tanks were landed at the harbors of Triigi and Roomasaare and were approximately 150-200 in number. It was reported that the tanks are now concentrated at the various artillery positions principally in the northwestern section of the island.

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11. The following airfields on the island are known [REDACTED]

- a. Marientali airfield (2 km east of Kuressaare) - Used as a civilian airfield. Regular daily air communication with Tallinn (59-26N, 24-45E). (One-way ticket costs 96 rubles.)
- b. Aste airfield (58-21N, 22-27E, 15 km north of Kuressaare) - approximately 2000 by 2000 meters in size, no concrete runways. About 60 airplanes of the types Pe-3, La-3, and Il-2 are normally stationed at the field.
- c. Monnuste-Sõmera airfield (58-19N, 22-15E, 25 km northwest of Kuressaare) - approximately 3000 by 3000 meters in size, no concrete runways. Normally about 50 planes are stationed at the field. In July 1949 the Soviet Air Force held large air maneuvers over the island and at that time about 350-400 planes were on the field. These planes were of the types Pe-3, La-3, and Il-2.
- d. On the mainland of Estonia two airfields have been observed. One at Uunemõisa (3 km north of Haapsalu) and another 2 km south of Haapsalu (58-56N, 23-32E). These two fields are, according to observation, used entirely as training bases.

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